

who leads NATO's training of Afghan security forces. He not only talks of the 2014 date as it's established policy; he says he needs more resources and more military trainers just to get Afghanistan ready to provide for their own security by that date.

So we've gone from the military saluting President Obama and saying they could get it done by July 2011, to saying that current levels of personnel aren't adequate to get the job done in four more years' time.

Lieutenant General Caldwell also echoed what other officials have said, that the 2014 date comes not from the Oval Office or the Pentagon or the situation room, but was initially put forward by Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai.

But since when, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, does a foreign head of state set our goals? I thought U.S. foreign policy and decisions about our national security were made by the elected representatives of the American people.

The truth, Mr. Speaker, is that things have gotten far worse in Afghanistan since we committed more troops. Our troops are dying at a greater pace than at any other point in the 9 years of war. Civilian casualties are also on the rise. The Afghan people have little confidence in our mission and its ability to improve their lives. The insurgency remains as nimble and sophisticated as ever. Effective local government is barely in existence.

We've heard all the arguments before about why accelerated time tables supposedly don't work; that they embolden the enemy; that the insurgents will simply wait us out until the date of departure. But they're not waiting us out now. They effectively control vast swaths of the country, and the one thing that is giving them greater strength and moral authority is the continued presence of our combat troops on Afghan soil.

How much more do we have to fail before we change strategies, I ask? How many chances are we going to give this military occupation? How much patience are we supposed to have? I say, not a minute more, Mr. Speaker. I say it's time to bring our troops home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CONGRATULATING JACINTO "ACE" ACEBAL ON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, tonight I am so honored to recognize an outstanding public servant, Jacinto Acebal, or "Ace" as he is known by his friends. He will soon be retiring from the United States Postal Service after 45 years of service.

Ace has helped accomplish the United States Postal Service mission to provide efficient mail service to every address within our country. Ace has assisted not only individuals but also the needs of our small businesses in south Florida. In an area as busy and as diverse as south Florida, Ace never misses a beat.

As a testament to his dedication and tireless efforts, Ace was recently recognized by his colleagues at the Hispanic Organization of Postal Employees. It is indeed a tribute for an individual whose career has had such humble beginnings.

Proud of having been born in Cuba and never losing his yearning for a free and democratic Cuba, Ace also proudly served our country in the military serving in Vietnam. In fact, he is the most highly decorated Cuban American to have fought in Vietnam.

Ace joined the postal service after his service in 1968 as a letter carrier; and I'm proud to say that he employed the same focus, the same determination, the same patriotism that marked his distinguished military career. As a result, he impressed his superiors and rose through the ranks. Ace has held numerous managerial positions including supervisor, human resource specialist, and Hispanic program specialist.

In this last position he has also been an invaluable liaison to the Hispanic community. Ace is regularly interviewed by news outlets, and he helps promote postal service products and services to our diverse Hispanic community nationwide.

Ace has appeared on national news programs that have aired in Hispanic markets across the country. The United States Postal Service's Executive Committee has also presented Ace with a special recognition award for his media relations efforts.

Above all else, Ace has been an exemplary and active member in our south Florida community. The City of Miami Commission appointed him to the Miami Community Relations Board.

He's also a member of the Spanish American League Against Discrimination and has served on the greater Miami Hispanic Council and the United Way of Dade County subcommittee.

Ace has been awarded the Diversity Vice President Partnership Award, the Dot Sharpe Lifetime Achievement, and has been named Federal employee of the year. Simply put, Jacinto Acebal has been a tireless leader in our community and a shining example of professionalism and service. His talents will be sorely missed at the United States Postal Service. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy; and I join his many friends, family and peers in celebrating

his well-earned retirement. You have served our community well, Ace and I am lucky to count you as a friend. Congratulations, my friend.

ECONOMIC ISSUES: THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. I come here to address the House on economic issues facing us this month and next month. And I come here to talk about the good, the bad and the ugly. First, the good.

The Federal Reserve Board is going to buy \$600 billion worth of long-term bonds, quantitative easing. This will increase America's share of the American market for manufacturers' goods. That's why it has been condemned by China, Germany and Japan, because they know it means moving jobs from Germany, Japan and China to the United States.

This is an effective tool that is reversible. We can expand the money supply now, and then the Federal Reserve Board can reverse its action when the economy improves. Therefore, it involves no increase in the money supply that is permanent and, of course, involves no increase in our national debt.

The unemployment rate is over 9.6 percent. We need to act to bring down that unemployment rate. And the Fed is to be commended. This does not mean that its decision is risk free. Just, given all the risk that we're confronted with, this is a good move. And the fact that the countries that are running giant trade surpluses with it have condemned us gives it an additional advantage.

Second, the bad. The tax proposals, and I focus here only on the tax proposals of the Simpson-Bowles proposal, they have offered three different versions of their tax proposal and I will address what they call the Wyden-Gregg approach. There are two other approaches, the zero plan, which is even worse than the one I'm going to describe, and a third option of basically doing nothing except inviting the Ways and Means Committee to earn their salary and to look at our tax law.

Now, I was anxious to embrace this proposal because we need to see shared sacrifice. We all are looking for a way to pay down the debt, and I, for one, was willing to embrace a program of shared sacrifice and austerity. But Messrs. Bowles and Simpson have given sacrifice a bad name by using our desire for shared sacrifice to disguise a giant tax cut for large corporations.

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It needs to be cut by a quarter. This in the name of increasing revenue. This in the name of austerity and shared sacrifice. No. This in the name of using the debt crisis as an opportunity to shift wealth and power and income